



**Legislative Council  
Portrait of the city parliament**





## History

### 1832

First meeting of the community's citizens. At 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, October 17th, 1832, 546 persons entitled to vote met for the first meeting of the community of Bern in the Münster cathedral.

### 1887

The community regulations of December 11th, 1887 introduced the ballot vote and as a legislative body founded the legislative council in its present form.

### 1888

On March 8th, 1888, the first meeting of the Legislative Council takes place in today's composition of 80 members and in its function as legislative body.

## Composition

The Legislative Council of Bern has **80 members**. They are elected for a term of four years by the voting citizens of Bern. In the legislative period of 2017-2020 the Legislative Council is made up of the following parties:

Social Democratic Party	SP	<b>22</b>
Swiss People's Party	SVP	<b>9</b>
Green Alliance	GB	<b>9</b>
Free Democratic Party	FDP	<b>9</b>
Green Party Free List	GFL	<b>8</b>
Green Liberal Party	GLP	<b>7</b>
Conservative Democratic Party	BDP	<b>3</b>
Christian Democratic People's Party	CVP	<b>2</b>
Evangelical People's Party	EVP	<b>2</b>
Young Alternatives	JA!	<b>2</b>
Alternative Left of Bern	AL	<b>2</b>
Young Socialists	JUSO	<b>2</b>
Green Party of Bern – Democratic Alternative	GPB-DA	<b>1</b>
Party of Labour	PdA	<b>1</b>
Young Green Liberal Party	JGLP	<b>1</b>



## Tasks

The Bern city parliament has legislative powers, decides about the budget and other significant expenses, supervises the executive council and the municipal administration and serves as an electoral body for certain panels. Parliamentary proposals are among its main tools for performing its tasks.

### Regulations and fees

The Legislative Council draws up all of the regulations (laws). Most of the regulations are subject to facultative or obligatory popular votes. They include land-use plans, modifications of the zone plan etc. Under reserve of the facultative popular vote, the Legislative Council determines for which municipal tasks fees should be charged and how high these should be.

### Budget and expenditures

In summer the Legislative Council discusses the budget (product group budget) before presenting it to the voters in November. In spring it approves the accounts and the annual report. Furthermore, the Legislative Council takes decisions about expenditures of more than 300,000 Francs, while expenditures above seven million Francs must be submitted to the voters. It takes decisions on project and supplementary loans and checks loan accounts.

### Elections

The Legislative Council elects the administrative committees for ewb and BernMobil, the members of the school committees, the representatives of the city to the parliament of an association of local government, the internal auditing office as well as the ombuds-person and the Council's secretary. Moreover, it elects from among its own ranks the members of the Legislative Council's presidency, the Office and the preparatory committees.

### Supervision

The Legislative Council supervises the executive council and the municipal administration. Supervision is based on the following activities:

- Discussion of the legislation guidelines and the financial budget
- Decision on the annual report
- Supervision of the executive council and the administration by the supervisory committee
- Appointment of non-permanent committees or a parliamentary investigation committee.



## Bodies

The Council usually meets in the town hall once a fortnight, dealing with some 400 to 500 issues a year. The most important parliamentary bodies are:

### Presidency

The Council's presidency calls the Legislative Council's sessions and determines the agenda. It conducts the negotiations and represents the parliament at official occasions and estivities. The Legislative Council's mayor is elected for the duration of a calendar year at the first session

### Office

The Council office is the Legislative Council's management. It is made up of the mayor, the two vice-mayors, two counting assistants and (with advisory votes) the Council's secretary and the town clerk.

### Committees

The Legislative Council includes a supervisory committee, three standing expert committees und an agglomeration committee with 11 members each. The committees examine the budget and the annual report and deliberate on the dealings in preparation for the Legislative Council. The supervisory committee performs tasks of administrative control for the Legislative Council.

## Council Secretariat

As an independent administrative office of the parliament, the Council's secretariat supports the Legislative Council and its bodies in the performance of all its tasks.

### Contact

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### Open hours

Monday to Friday  
9 a.m. to 12 noon  
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Fridays until 4 p.m.